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PORTLAND, FRIDAY, JANUARY 7, 1916.

THE MIDDLE GROUND.

It is a fair presumption that the Progressive Business Men's Club was seeking entertainment rather than information when it invited two speakers of radically opposing views to discuss the Oregon system. Mr. Ballinger can discern no great and lasting good that has come from its operation. Mr. U'Ren gives it full credit for most of the important uplift accomplished in Oregon in recent years. Business men who are "progressive" have been able, it may be supposed, through observation and participation to reach their own conclusions.

The remarks of both Judge Ballinger and Mr. U'Ren were, however, interesting and entertaining. Judge Ballinger confined his address to comparing the newer form with the theory of representative government as it was entertained by early Americans and to a more general than specific review of lack of accomplishments of the Oregon system. Mr. U'Ren dealt with what he interpreted to be concrete results and to prophecies for the future. In our own modest opinion the Oregon system has been accused of much for which it is not to blame and has been credited with much for which it is not responsible. Mr. U'Ren, as an enthusiastic supporter, fell into the latter error.

In the light of what has transpired in election reforms concurrently in other states which have not, or had not until lately, adopted the Oregon system, it is difficult to accept Mr. U'Ren's interpretation of Oregon events in recent years. Those reforms and the system itself may be more properly classed as symptoms of a moral awakening, without giving either one credit for the other. Fraudulent voting, legislative bribery and the like were not confined to Oregon a decade ago, and they have been eradicated quite generally and in many states without the preliminary adoption of the direct legislation principle or so comprehensive a direct primary as Oregon's.

Two or three years ago Samuel G. Blythe wrote an article comparing advanced legislation in Oregon with that in Washington. The latter state had not then adopted the initiative and referendum. Mr. Blythe showed that most of the progress then ascribed in Oregon to the initiative and referendum had been adopted in Washington without the aid of those two mediums of expressing the people's will. Were it possible to make a similar comparison with some other state and bring that comparison up to date with the same results, we still would not say that the usefulness of the initiative and referendum was disproved.

The referendum has been found valuable in Oregon as "a gun behind the door," to prevent the imposition of bad legislation upon the people by misguided officials. The initiative has been of value, too, not only in obtaining laws which the Legislature was reluctant to enact, but in securing the adoption of needed constitutional amendments sooner than would have been possible without the initiative. A very respectable record could be cited in both particulars. Yet the record Mr. U'Ren cites departs somewhat from accuracy. He credits the workman's compensation law to the Oregon system. The fact is it was delayed in operation for one year by an unwarranted referendum, during which time numerous other states where there was no referendum were enjoying the benefits of similar laws. Abolishment of public gambling, dispersion of the segregated districts, fraudulent voting and other distinctly moral reforms were not accomplished through direct legislation, while the fact that similar reforms were inaugurated in other states indicates that the newer election methods for officers were not primarily responsible.

It was also an unfortunate reference he made to "an old system judge" in Washington who was caught sending an opinion to a railroad attorney to be revised and approved. The judge in question at the time his indiscretion was committed was serving as a gubernatorial appointee and had been elevated to the Supreme Bench through an exertion of improper political influence. At the time his indiscretion was discovered he had just been elected for a full term through the operations of a direct primary law, which embraced both second choice and non-partisan judiciary features.

The point we wish to emphasize is that there is a middle ground between condemnation and adulation of the Oregon system. It will not run itself. It will not automatically produce good officials, but it is a good agency for effecting that result. It actually enlarges the responsibility of the voters, and in giving them more power requires of them greater care and observation. In its direct legislation features it needs constant, intelligent watching. But to present it as the one lever which pried Oregon out of a political and moral mudhole is to tax credulity.

UNHAPPY DAYS.

Democrats are nothing if not theorists in their party principles and ideas of Government. Watchful waiting and spineless diplomacy have been products of the Democratic temperament. With the American public making demands which had to be met the Administration's preparedness programme was about the mildest, straddle-the-issue plan that could be devised to please all concerned. But in seeking to meet all demands from all sources the Administration has pleased no one.

From the public at large comes the cry that the preparedness programme is non-effective and ineffectual. From within the party, and particularly from the Bryan peace-at-any-price wing, a hue is raised that the defense programme is too drastic. There is a widespread public feeling that America has played the game of diplomatic buffoonery far beyond the limits of American dignity and Americanism. Yet within the party the demand is raised that the Administration go no farther.

It is a spectacle that might be funny if it were not tragic. These are trying days, indeed, for the Democrats. And more trying for a people whose destinies chance to be in such bewildered and uncertain hands in this vital hour.

LET IT REST.

The queer aspect of the Sunday law is that it has no basis in morals or in religion, but only in law. The courts say that it is free from any taint or suspicion of bigotry or fanaticism, and that in its enactment and enforcement it is a proper exercise of the police power. The public knows that no good can come to anyone if the law shall be put into effect, for it is ridiculously discriminatory, and arbitrarily puts under the ban certain useful and necessary works, businesses and occupations, while without rhyme or reason it exempts certain others.

Why, for example, should a grocery store be shut up and a bakery left open? Or a theater be unmolested while a baseball game is sternly suppressed?

No one worth heeding calls for the literal enforcement of the law as it stands—not even the authors of the new Rest Day which is to be a substitute for the orthodox Sunday. If now through the mistaken zeal of misguided zealots we are to have a campaign to make a dead law a live issue, a great deal of harm will be done—harm to the cause of a rational Sunday observance, which most people now agree is proper.

It may well be hoped that the relic of early-day foolishness which still reposes on the statute books—almost forgotten in its well-deserved neglect—will be permitted to remain there until the people or the Legislature have an opportunity to say what they want in the way of Sunday observance. The attention of the public and the authorities ought not now to be diverted from the prohibition law. It is enough for the time.

FORD'S UNFAITHFUL FRIENDS.

When the Ford pilgrims started out on their impossible mission a Portland Democratic evening newspaper was very much shocked because the press of this country did not take their enterprise seriously. It rose to great heights of righteous indignation in denouncing newspapers that did not consider the European pilgrimage as too sacred for jesting.

For example, on December 9 it said editorially in rebuking an Eastern paper that spoke of the Ford party as "joyriders of peace":

> Why this ridicule? Why are efforts of peace a joke? Why the ribald jests at Mr. Bryan because of his appeals against war? Why teach the rising generation of boys and girls that thoughts and aspirations for peace are comical and to be laughed at?

This pathetic editorial ended with the following tearful appeal:

> Beholding Europe as we do—Europe in its grave, Europe on crutches, Europe diseased, Europe devastated, Europe agonized, Europe broiled and bleeding, Europe stalking with the ghosts of its dead, Europe chained to debt, is there not a sacred aspect to every thought or mention, or striving for peace, no matter by whom, and no matter how trivial?

Now this same newspaper is ridiculing and scorning the Ford expedition collectively and individually in a series of cartoons that are the most derisive of all the criticisms yet made. Crude and blunt criticism of Ford and his followers, who, the evening paper has said, should be held up for the admiration of the rising generation, now finds ready acceptance for use in its purified and sanctified columns.

NO DRY SUNDAY THERE.

It is a surprise to note that the young and aggressive Mayor of the great city of New York is impotent before the power of Tammany, which did not elect him, for he confesses his inability to enforce the law against Sunday closing of saloons. He makes a long statement of the situation, which lays the blame for police helplessness upon the inadequacy of the laws, and proceeds to show that when a saloonkeeper is arrested he is almost invariably acquitted. The Mayor wants the State Legislature to do something, but he does not say what, except that he thinks New York should have a greater measure of home rule.

The great wave of protest against the saloon which has swept over the country has evidently made not even a ripple in New York. Even Chicago, which has long been held by its admirers to be fully as wicked as New York, has been able to shut up the Sunday saloon; but the New York Mayor repeats with parrot-like fidelity the hoary excuse that it can't be done. It is the old familiar device of the law officer everywhere who does not want to do it. Once it served, but now the public knows better.

New York without its lobster palaces, its cabarets, its Broadway, its Bowery and its midnight frolics would not be New York; but nevertheless it closes its theaters—except for "sacred" concerts—on Sunday. Nor does it have Sunday baseball games in the big leagues. But the people who are horrified at the profanation of the Sabbath by the lovers of wholesome sport and by the habitues of the theater, must have a place where they can buy a drink. Some day even New York will be different.

INVADING THE WORLD'S PEST HOLES.

In these troubled times we may overlook the constructive labor being undertaken in many quarters to carry forward the standards of civilization and lighten the burdens of misery that are visited upon the world. The report lately issued by the Rockefeller foundation indicates that such work is being done on a large and practical scale in the field of medical science and sanitation. A most profitable year of activity has followed the efforts of the skillful workers who are serving under the direction of this foundation, particularly in the service of the International Health Commission, a creation of the past year.

Important economic and health results have followed the commission's assaults on the insidious hookworm. In the Southern states, the commission reports the restoration of 500,000 toilers to a normal state of activity. That means half a million lives rescued from that wretched inertia which follows the depredations of the hookworm, depredations which deprive the victims of all ambition and interest in life. Before the isolation of the "hookworm" and the perfection of a method of treating the affliction hundreds of thousands of men, women and children were set down as "worthless white trash" and abandoned as utterly hopeless. The thought of these sufferers restored to usefulness and happiness is inspiring and from an economic standpoint the new campaign must be measured in millions of dollars.

Eleven foreign countries, principally in South and Central America, have solicited assistance in treating this "laziness" born of disease and all have received assistance. In Porto Rico it is recorded that great results have been achieved. The efficiency of coffee plantation workers was there increased fifty per cent. By gradually organizing the crusade in that great territory of hookworm activity which extended thirty degrees both ways from the Equator, the commission is destined to restore millions of practically worthless toilers to sound health and productivity.

Even China is receiving attention, and such men as Dr. Simon Flexner have been sent to the Orient to study the needs of the Chinese with a view of promoting agencies for modern sanitation. In the great achievements of sanitation in the Canal Zone, from which malarial and yellow fevers were driven by General Gorgas, the world was given an object lesson in the possibilities of scientific sanitation which should be applied in the Orient and particularly in China.

The purpose of this commission is "to promote sanitation and spread medical knowledge," a purpose worthy and practical since, after all, ignorance is the greatest ally of death and distress, while enlightenment drives from the dark places the worst scourges of humankind. It is gratifying to know that such well-organized efforts are put forward by Americans to sustain human life in this day when the best energies of Europe are exercised in the destruction of life.

AFRAID OF HIS PARTY?

Any action which President Wilson may take to uphold the right of Americans to travel the sea in safety and to place the Nation in an adequate state of defense will be taken in face of opposition from the leaders and probably from the majority of the Democratic party in Congress and with aid from the great majority of the Republican party in Congress. That is apparent from the tenor of the debate on foreign policy in the Senate. Democrats with few exceptions denied the duty of the Government to uphold the right of American citizens to travel on belligerent ships; Republicans with few exceptions affirmed that duty. Democrats maintained that neutrality requires the United States to place an embargo on exports of arms; Republicans maintained that an embargo would be a grossly unneutral act.

There is like division of opinion on the President's preparedness programme. The Democratic leaders in Congress, Senator Kern and Representative Kitchin, have declared against any increase in our armament, and they are supported by at least a large minority, if not by a majority, of their party. The President's policy is supported by a great majority of Republicans, who disagree with him only in doubting the efficacy of the measures he proposes to attain the end which both he and they have in view.

Behind the scenes is the sinister figure of Mr. Bryan, pouring his insidious doctrines of pacifism and defenselessness into the ears of Democrats, whose hunger for appropriations to be expended in their particular districts makes them willing listeners. His influence, though much diminished by patriotic aversion for a man who deserts and seeks to weaken his chief in a National crisis, is still great, and it is used to paley the arm of his country in defending itself and its citizens.

Clearly, if the President is to be upheld in defending the Nation, he will derive his main strength from the Republican, not from the Democratic party. Rather than strike a blow or spend a dollar in the cause wherein all should unite, many Democrats will divide their party, desert their leader, be recreant to their duty as Americans and expose their country to the scorn of the world. Rather than see their country shirk its duty to defend itself and its citizens, the great body of Republicans will stand firmly behind the President, who is nominal head of the opposite party. Whatever the President obtains from Congress in this emergency will be obtained through Republican votes, for he cannot muster enough loyal Democratic votes to win without Republican aid. He is in the same position as Cleveland, the last Democratic President, who procured repeal of the disastrous silver purchase law with Republican aid. Once more the Democratic party proves that it will not follow where a patriotic chief leads in times of National crisis. Once more does the Republican party forget party in response to the call of country.

The present situation in Congress goes far to explain the President's halting policy towards the Teuton powers. He has never been able to feel sure that, if he took a firm stand, put an end to argument and by a show of force behind his diplomacy demanded as accounting for the murder of our citizens, his party would stand behind him. Mr. Bryan, as Secretary of State, pulled him back when the occasion required decisive action. When he shook off this restraint, Mr. Bryan changed from a secret clog on his movements into an open obstruction. Temperamentally averse to vigorous deeds so long as he could make words serve, Mr. Wilson's reluctance to yield to the logic of events has been constantly stiffened by doubt that his party would approve. Foreseeing the political wreck which would ensue, he has shrunk from acting in reliance upon his political opponents for support.

What hope can we entertain that Germany and Austria will act with any more respect for American rights in the future than in the past when there is division in the President's own political household as to the propriety of insisting upon those rights? The statesmen of those nations are guided as much by their knowledge of our internal politics as by the military exigencies of their own situation. Why should they heed the protests of a statesman whose own followers question the wisdom of even protesting and who openly rebel against a proposal even to make ready to fight?

The principles for which the President has contended in his numerous notes and which his own reluctance to act and his party's doubtful loyalty have prevented him from putting in practice—those principles intimately affect the very stability of the Nation. They uphold the reign of law against the reign of brute force, the reign of humanity against the reign of barbarism. A nation which refuses to defend them by any means that may prove necessary to their supremacy offers a standing invitation to the powers of barbarous force to make themselves supreme in its midst. Dissolution of the nation would follow.

A nation which refuses to protect its citizens in exercising their undoubted right to travel the highways of the sea unmolested serves notice upon them in effect that they must stay at home out of regard for their own safety. It practically warns them that, should they go abroad, they would better become citizens and seek the protection of some other nation, for this nation will afford them no protection. It informs them that their rights abroad are not such as their own country's might can maintain but only such as the most barbarous nation which roves the seas will concede. Hence it would follow that our most enterprising citizens, who might extend American commerce to the remotest lands, would take refuge under other flags and only those would remain Americans whom timidity or lack of energy prompted to stay at home.

The goose whose gullet yielded a $13.50 gold nugget at Dayton the other day is certain to set the owner of every flock to work with spade and pan. It has not been possible to trace the origin of the goose, which was bought in the open market. The most known is that it was a domestic goose from some Washington ranch. The nugget may have been merely a detached bit of wealth, or it may have been part of a great store awaiting discovery. At least such a possibility is certain to set amateur gold-seekers in motion among the goose runways of the state, and intent upon what may prove to be a mere goose chase.

E. H. Gary looks for "the firm establishment of an international tribunal for the settlement of all international differences," yet pacifists would class him as a militarist because the steel trust makes material for war munitions. It never occurs to a pacifist that, should Judge Gary regard war from a purely cold-blooded business standpoint, he might see more profit in the steady, growing demands of peace than in the spasmodic, destructive demands of war.

The scheme for Government purchase of the Chesapeake & Delaware Canal was probably suggested by the use which the Germans have made of the Kiel Canal. Submarines have been able to slip in and out safely and the German fleet has been able to lie in safe harbor, despite Mr. Churchill's threat to "dig them like rats out of their hole." A retreat with two outlets is very handy for warships.

"Ungenerous traits of the human mind" are not confined to Colonel Roosevelt. What sort of a trait was it that prompted Mr. Bryan to trace the preparedness movement to greed of munition manufacturers or President Wilson to say the Republican party had not had a new idea in thirty years?

John H. Stevenson has conducted the office of Judge of the Municipal Court in a way that has earned appreciation of this community. He has tempered justice with mercy and charity when such was needed and ruled with an iron hand when deserved. His record is good.

A Portland newspaper refers to Arthur Langguth, the new Municipal Judge, as a "young attorney." Mr. Langguth recently, with considerable pride, announced that he had become a grandfather. Still, it is possible for a grandfather to be young.

Of course the wishes of the West will be ignored by the House in voting on the water-power bill. What has the West to do with it except pay tribute?

Bryan is now snooping about the edges of the political ring reconnoitering his chances of heading the party on a peace-at-any-price platform.

Diana, the huntress, has been reincarnated in Coos County in the persons of Mrs. Lena Fleming and Mrs. V. Woodfield, the bear-slayers.

And just to think of all these submarine attacks after the Administration had settled the difficulty with one of its "great moral victories."

Let those who have been complaining of cold weather read the news from the East and thank their stars they live in Oregon.

At last there is something new under the sun, despite Solomon. A Democratic officeholder with a $3300 job has quit in dead of Winter.

Judge Gary, of Steel, says prosperity has its perils. Possibly; yet all will grab rather than shy when it comes knocking.

The farther from Berlin is the source of rumors about the Kaiser's illness, the worse is his malady represented to be.

World fairs are pretty much alike, but San Antonio may put the long horn into hers in 1918 and make it different.

A boy must be 21 now to hang around a poolroom. Many of twice that age are too young for the habit.

Germany is to get goat milk, according to dispatches. But the supply is not yet available from the allies' goat.

Jane Addams was taken sick just in time to save her face, if she does not now spoil all by talking too much.

Coasting is certainly an innovation at this season when we are ordinarily planning to prune the rose bushes.

When the mercury drops forty degrees in one Winter day, that is the well-known dull thud.

It's a dull day when Oregon does not get a million-dollar order for something or other.

The next big events on the year's programme are baseball and the Spring offensive.

The misguided wretch who named this Baby year has plenty of time for another guess.

This weather gives one an idea of how it must feel on the firing line these days.

Experiments with soft drinks in the hope of a "kick" are now the order of the day.

But if all the defense bills were passed it would bankrupt the Nation.

It looked like Spring for awhile yesterday, lacking the "feel."

How to Keep Well

By Dr. W. A. Evans.

Questions pertinent to hygiene, sanitation and prevention of disease, if matters of general interest, will be answered in this column. Where space will not permit or the subject is not suitable, letters will be personally answered, subject to proper limitations and where a stamped, addressed envelope is inclosed. Dr. Evans will not make diagnosis or prescribe for individual diseases. Requests for such service cannot be answered.

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Keeping Books on Health.

The census office recently issued a statement of some gains in health, some of which are to be credited to 1915, but most of them belong to 1914.

On January 1, 1915, South Carolina put in operation a law for the registration of births and deaths. During this year Illinois and Florida enacted similar laws. Within a short while, therefore, these three states will be added to the registration area. At the present time two-thirds of the people live in the registration area.

What does this mean? It means that about two-thirds of the people are now keeping books on themselves. From these books they are able to tell whether they are healthy or unhealthy, to plan campaigns to improve living conditions. It means that when they are trying to decide how much money to spend to control consumption, typhoid fever, and sickness among babies they will have statistics on which they can base opinions. The addition of South Carolina, Illinois and Florida to the registration area, therefore, represents a gain for 1915.

Except for the above information relative to the registration area, the story in the census bulletin is one of health conditions in some parts of the United States for the year 1914. The 1915 data will not be available for another year.

The year 1914 was a very healthy year. The death rate was 13.6, as compared with 13.9 in 1912, the healthiest year in history prior to that time. A death rate of 13.6 means that one seventy-third of the entire population died in 1914. Comparing 1914 with the first five years of this century, and assuming that the improvement in the whole country was as great as it was in the registration area, the number of lives saved in 1914 throughout the United States was 150,000—a fair-sized army.

The states in which the greatest saving was made were Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Vermont, Connecticut, Indiana, Maine and New Hampshire. It is no accident that in this list are to be found many, if not most, of the states with well-developed state health departments.

The cities in which the greatest savings were made were, in the order named: Jersey City, New York City, San Francisco, Denver, Newark, Pittsburg, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Lowell and Paterson. The honor of having the lowest death rate among the cities fell to Portland, Or.

Little One Likes Cider.

W. E. N. writes: "We have a little son three years old, who dearly loves cider. He will drink four or five glasses a day if allowed. The cider is treated with one-half box of sulphate of lime, two pounds of raisins, ten pounds of sugar and whites of eggs to the full barrel. It is keeping nicely and is not any more 'bity' than when treated. It has been made only about two weeks, and stood about two days before we treated it. If it is not good for him, or will harm him in after years, we do not want him to have it; but if there is no danger in any way, we would let him enjoy it, as he surely does like it. We especially mean about the forming of appetite for alcoholic drinks. Will you kindly answer as soon as convenient?"

REPLY.

Let him have it.

Outdoor Sleeping.

A. A. B. writes: "A healthy seven-pound boy arrived November 7. He is normal in every way, shows progress and is nursed by his mother, who is also in excellent health. I am anxious that he begin to sleep out of doors on a protected porch with north exposure as soon as possible during the day. Will you tell through your column when this would be advisable? After a natural birth with no complications what is the length of time required for the mother to remain in bed to recover?"

REPLY.

Begin by airing the nursery often enough to keep the air fresh. When the child is one month old leave him for 15 minutes on the porch. You can increase this 15 minutes a day. At three months roll him out of doors every day that the temperature is over 20 and the wind is not strong. (2). Varies. Some women get up in a week. Authorities insist on two.

Restlessness Is Mental.

H. P. writes: "At night just after I retire I become uncontrollably restless. I feel an emptiness around the heart, and I feel as if entire body were passing through space. I know that I am somewhat restless and nervous, but do not understand this feeling that comes over me. If you think this is nervousness would a tonic help me?"

REPLY.

The condition is mental and the treatment must be mental. No spoon treatment is indicated.

Should Be Examined.

Constant Reader writes: "I am a constant sufferer with pains over each eye. My sight is apparently good, but the eyeballs are of a reddish-yellow hue. Is it possible to clear them? If so, how? Do not think the color due to organic disorders."

REPLY.

Although you think your sight is good you should have your eyes examined.

New Man's Mistakes.

Judge.

Manager—I'm disgusted with the mistakes that new man makes! He gets everything balled up.

Assistant Manager—Oh, well, some of the best ones are that way at the beginning. He may bring home the bacon yet.

Manager—He won't unless we send him for ham.

Talk Between Friends.

Judge.

"Say, old chap, you're a good friend of mine, aren't you?"

"Sure. And you're a good friend of mine, aren't you?"

"Sure. And, say, I want to borrow $10."

"Quiet, Major, quiet. Listen. So do I, and if you can find anybody with a few bucks to spare, let me know, will you?"

At a Dinner Party.

Boston Transcript.

Mrs. Newrich had been told by her caller that a certain dinner party had "wound up with great eclat." When her husband came home she asked him what "a-kla" meant. "Why, that's the dessert, I guess," said Newrich. "Didn't you ever eat a chocolate a-kla?"

Financial Measures.

Boston Transcript.

Judge—Why did you commit a second theft after you had just been acquitted of the first one?

Prisoner—I had to pay my lawyer, your honor.

Berberis Aquifolium.

VANCOUVER, B. C., Jan. 4.—(To the Editor.)—Kindly state in The Oregonian the scientific name for the Oregon grape. W. B. JAMES.

No.

PORTLAND, Jan. 6.—(To the Editor.)—In entering into a partnership is it necessary to have papers drawn up by a lawyer? SUBSCRIBER.

GERMANY'S STAND ON WAR TRADE

Representatives Approved Traffic in Discussions at The Hague.

PORTLAND, Jan. 6.—(To the Editor.)—Apropos to ex-Governor Geer's worried letters regarding America's attitude as to exportation of war materials to the allies, I am quoting you the remarks of Eugene Zimmermann, director-general of the Berliner Lokalanzeiger, Berlin, Germany, as quoted by the Outlook of December 29, 1915, on page 1053, and am drawing from them conclusions which reveal America's attitude in no mistaken light. I am quoting one paragraph in full as follows:

> The reproach to America for furnishing war materials to our enemies is not fair. It is unjust. It was Germany herself who, in The Hague discussions, defeated the proposition to forbid the shipment of war materials from neutral states to belligerents. A free course was left open to private citizens.

Herr Zimmermann further remarks that Germany has purchased vast supplies of war materials from Sweden.

The German General Staff, Bernhardi and German military writers in general have minimized previous to this war, of course, the effect of an English blockade, claiming that Germany could carry on her trade through neutral countries. This assertion coming practically unanimously from the German military mind, gives significance to Germany's refusal to countenance an international law forbidding neutrals to sell war materials to belligerents. Germany herself as a belligerent wanted to import war materials and in view of her belief that she could obtain these materials during a war deliberately set about to maintain the status which would allow her to do so.

In due time Germany's war came along. At first her plan to import war materials worked beautifully. The little Scandinavian countries bought from the United States war supplies necessary for the wants of a military power of the first magnitude; Germany through Scandinavian agents was buying contraband from America. Everything went on lovely till England woke up and stopped the whole affair. As soon as it became evident that England had a monopoly on the war material trade, a howl that America was adding flames to the European war rent the German air. Immediately Germany believed it against humanitarian law for a neutral to sell war material to a belligerent. To pass out this stupid hypocrisy is no compliment to our mentality.

America from the start sold contraband directly to England and indirectly to Germany. Of this fact there can be no denial. By the fortunes of war Germany was shut off from her supply. From this it is self-evident that it would be favoritism of no mistaken dye for America to deny contraband to England. It also must be self evident to ex-Governor Geer, that in view of all the above facts, it is not incumbent upon America to express herself one way or the other upon her attitude toward contraband exportations to belligerents. Her attitude is the known attitude of the world excluding Germany who maintained the attitude till she was cut off from all its benefits.

The question is not whether America has a right to ship contraband to belligerents, but whether America has a right to ship contraband through neutral countries to belligerents (to the central powers for instance). After all their blind talk about embargoes and humanity will the Germans have the temerity to press the latter question?

G. S. TWOMBLY, 309 Jefferson st.

NEAR-BEER TAX IS INOPPORTUNE

Sale Should Be Encouraged in Absence of Temperance Centers.

PORTLAND, Jan. 6.—(To the Editor.)—It has been rumored that the Council is contemplating a heavy license on concerns selling near-beer.

The writer is a property owner and has lived here all of his life, and the property in which he is interested pays taxes of approximately $4500—perhaps $5000, its assessed value being in the neighborhood of $180,000. Therefore I have some interest in the reduction of taxes. I also will state that I doubt if I have taken a drink of liquor in five years, and have certainly not entered a saloon during that time.

However, it must be remembered that the saloon was and its successor will be the workingman's club, and in view of the fact that our prohibition friends have failed to recognize the justice of giving working people a proper lounging and recreation center, or rather centers, it seems but fair that these soft-drink places, even though they do sell near-beer, should be allowed to exist and be encouraged.

The mere fact that perhaps three or four places exist in the city where a comparatively few workingmen can congregate does not solve the problem by any means. There were probably 350 saloons in the city of which perhaps 200 were those frequented by working people. There should be at least from 50 to 100 temperance places, whether operated by the prohibitionists or by the former saloonkeepers is immaterial.

Just as soon as those who so strongly advocated the closing of the saloons have demonstrated by actual fact, to-wit: by the installation of temperance localities, their bona fide intention of taking care of the people who are without homes or who desire intercourse with their fellow men, then it is proper that stringent regulations and a license fee should be exacted from places selling near-beer, or like products; but until those who have deprived the workingmen of their places of recreation have done their duty, it seems that these soft-drinking establishments should be encouraged and not discouraged.

The great trouble with most of us is that where we are people of means we have no difficulty in finding places in which to meet our fellow men, and we lose sight of the fact that our less fortunate people desire the same privilege.

It is to be hoped, therefore, that reason and justice, instead of narrow-minded fanaticism, will prevail.

TAXPAYER.

Birds That Winter in Oregon.

PORTLAND, Jan. 6.—(To the Editor.)—I live in the suburbs and during the last two days my yard has been full of birds, seeking food. Can you tell me what the varieties are and give me a description of them? Are some of them grosbeaks and what variety? What is an Alaska robin? I can find no description of one. I have looked through some bird books and I cannot match my birds to any of the same.

A SUBSCRIBER.

It is rather hard to identify the birds without some description. The grosbeaks hardly ever appear before Spring. The distinguishing feature of the Winter, or Alaska, robin, is the black band around its neck.

For fullest description of birds, so that their identity will be possible, consult some of the bird books on sale at most of the standard book stores.

Runs in Cribbage.

WEISER, Idaho, Jan. 4.—(To the Editor.)—A plays a 10, B plays a 3, A plays a deuce, B plays an ace, which makes B a run of 3. Then A plays a 3. Does this entitle him to a run of 3 also? And if B then plays another ace, is he entitled to a run of 3?

A READER.

On playing the second 3, A is entitled to a run of 3, for the cards have run 3, 3, 2 without any intervening card. On playing the second ace B has no run, for the first ace breaks the run before he reaches back to the deuce, as the cards run, counting backwards, 3, 2, 1, 3.

In Other Days

Twenty-Five Years Ago.

From The Oregonian of January 7, 1891.

A. J. McMillan, who was sent by Captain T. W. Symonds, United States Engineers, to make a survey of the Chehalis River, and the channels in Grays Harbor, has returned. He completed the surveys of Grays Harbor and Chehalis River and also of Shoalwater Bay and the Willapa and NNasel Rivers.

The Hotel Perkins was the scene last evening of a wedding between J. S. Turner, a prosperous stockman of Woodland, Wash., and Mrs. Nina Hoffner, of Indiana. Rev. T. L. Eliot officiated at the ceremony.

A mass meeting of real estate agents was held at the Masonic hall last night. The object of the meeting was stated to be to take some action looking to the repeal of the city ordinance taxing the fraternity. Addresses were made by F. V. Andrews, J. P. Koehler, J. C. McCaffery, Thomas Guinean, M. W. Roberts, J. F. Compton, W. A. Wautz, Charles Henry, E. E. Long and J. D. Hart.

A large force of men was put to work yesterday changing the track of the Washington-street Railway from Fourth down to First to T-rail and they will also extend the line to Front street. The Council put a stop to laying T-rail some time ago and there has been $50,000 derived from the sale of the bonds of the Multnomah Street Railway Company lying idle in Chicago ever since, as the company could not get it until they fulfilled their contract by laying T-rail to Front street.

A. B. Steinbach will leave for the East about January 10 to be absent five weeks.

State Senator Henry Blackman, of Heppner, is at the Gilman on his way to Salem to attend the session of the Legislature.

COURT OF NATIONS NEXT STEP

Civilization Thought to Be Now Ready for International Government.

PORTLAND, Jan. 6.—(To the Editor.)—In the New York World of December 29, 1915, on the front page, you will find this headline: "Court of Nations Must Rule the World Is Belief of Root."

Then follows this summary:

> A definite code written by all nations of the world to supplant the patchwork of tacit agreements and treaties which now constitute international law; this code to be adjudicated by a court representative of the entire world. Public opinion of the world should be ever ready to support the rulings of this court.
>
> The nation which violates the law written by all nations acted upon by the international court should be treated as an international criminal and should be punished by the family of nations. Until all nations recognized their duty of supporting this international law they could not expect to have their rights respected.

It would seem to me that this plan should be given the widest publicity, particularly since it emanates from such a respected source. For a long time I have felt that there should be something like this, backed up by an Army and Navy, supported for the sole purpose of punishing evil doers, just as a police force is supported.

Civilization had to grow to a point where this is practical, but since we have grown through the stages of individual, family, community, state and Nation, why is it unreasonable to assume that we are now ready for international government?

Think of the great efficiency in having just one army and one navy supported by all Nations!

W. H. CRAWFORD.

Another Unavailable Slogan.

HAMMOND, Or., Jan. 4.—(To the Editor.)—I, too, have written a prize winning rose slogan, but am quite sure it does not comply with the Rose Festival committee rules because—oh well, what's the use explaining? If you will print it, the voters of Oregon will readily acknowledge it a gem, and the committee may be induced to suspend the rules. Here is the way it goes:

> Rose joy by the bushel, rose joy by the peck,
> But nary a drop of joyness down our neck.
>
> —By Hack!

The last line may be omitted without impairing the general sense. It is only put in to add force to the sentiment expressed. PEE-JAY-GEE.

Press Time and Cold Weather.

CLATSKANIE, Or., Jan. 5.—(To the Editor.)—1. What time does The Oregonian go to press?

2. What was the lowest temperature in Portland last Winter, 1914-15?

MRS. O'NEILL.

(1) The three regular editions of The Oregonian close at 9:40 P. M., 11:50 P. M. and 1:40 A. M. respectively.

(2) The coldest day in the Winter of 1914-1915 was December 21, when a temperature of 22 degrees was recorded.

Scope of Parental Authority.

SALEM, Or., Jan. 5.—(To the Editor.)—1. Can a bright and nice young man who is 18 years old, capable in every way to take care of himself, and is good to his father and mother, be compelled by his father to stay at home and be without work or money? 2. Could the father forbid his son calling on and visiting with nice, respectable people? A. B. C.

Yes to both questions.

Boundary Line in Great Lakes.

CLATSKANIE, Or., Jan. 5.—(To the Editor.)—To whom do the Great Lakes belong? And where is the boundary line through the lakes? L. B. B.

The United States boundary line follows the middle of the Great Lakes from the St. Lawrence River to the northern line of Minnesota.

For Promotion of Mining.

AIRLIE, Or., Jan. 5.—(To the Editor.)—Please publish address of an assay office, where we can have dirt assayed that some think has radium in it. SUBSCRIBER.

Write to H. M. Parks, director Oregon Bureau of Mines and Geology, Corvallis, Or.

Newspaper at Forest Grove.

METOLIUS, Or., Jan. 4.—(To the Editor.)—Do you know if there is a paper edited in Forest Grove and if so what is the name of it? AVA MOORE.

Forest Grove's newspaper is the News-Times.

It Is Matter of Choice.

DAYTON, Or., Jan. 5.—(To the Editor.)—Kindly inform me as to which would be proper: I was left a widow and should I use my husband's given name as before or will I use my own?

MRS. S. F. G.

Playing Fair With the Customer

The old order of "substituting something else" has passed from retail merchandising.

It is no longer sound business.

When you ask a storekeeper for an article by name you are pretty sure of getting what you ask for.

If you don't you have the right to view that store with suspicion.

You are fair in asking yourself, "is not that dealer trying to exploit me for his own profit?"